

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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O 051225Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5740

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SEOUL 5846

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, KS, JA

SUBJECT: JAPAN-ROK DIFFICULTIES

REF (A) STATE 192529; (B) SEOUL 5845

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN INTEREST ENSURING USG FULLY INFORMED CURRENT STATE OF PLAY, PRIMIN KIM CHONG-PIL GAVE CHARGE LENGTHY DESCRIPTION HIS EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT GOJ RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT PARK'S MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR USHIROKU IS SUFFICIENTLY FORTHCOMING TO PERMIT HIM PERSUADE PRESIDENT NOT TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION AGAINST JAPAN. PRIMIN INDICATED THAT ROKG, AND PRESIDENT PARK IN PARTICULAR, IS INCREASINGLY IRRITATED OVER UNRESPONSIVE ATTITUDE OF JAPANESE AND THAT PRESIDENT SEEMED TO REGARD TANAKA DEPARTURE ON SEPT 12 AS POSSIBLE DEADLINE FOR SATISFACTORY JAPANESE REPLY. HE AGAIN REQUESTED USG ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE GOJ TO DO ALL POSSIBLE TO MEET ROKG REQUIREMENTS, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT REPLY TO CHARGE'S DIRECT QUESTION REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ROKG ACTION AGAINST JAPAN WHICH MIGHT EMBARRASS ANY EFFORT USG WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIMIN KIM CHONG-PIL CALLED IN CHARGE PRIVATELY AFTERNOON SEPT 5 FOR ONE HOUR DISCUSSION OF ROK/JAPAN DIFFICULTIES, PURPOSE OF WHICH WAS TO ENSURE THAT USG FULLY INFORMED ABOUT GROWING ROK IRRITATION WITH LACK

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OF JAPANESE RESPONSIVENESS, TO OUTLINE STEPS HE HAS

TAKEN IN ATTEMPT TO ENSURE THAT JAPANESE RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT PARK'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION IN CASE IS SUFFICIENTLY FORTHCOMING TO PERMIT HIM TO PERSUADE PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT IT, AND TO SOLICIT US ASSISTANCE.

3. IN CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED PRESENTATION, PRIMIN REVIEWED FAMILIAR HISTORY OF JAPANESE INVOLVEMENT IN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AND BASIS FOR ROKG FEELING THAT JAPAN HAS NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY COOPERATIVE TO DATE. HE SAID THAT REPORTS OF JAPANESE ACTIONS HAVE CONVINCED ROKG THAT JAPANESE INVESTIGATIONS ARE BEING CONDUCTED FOR JAPAN'S OWN PURPOSES AND NOT IN EFFORT TO MEET ROK REQUESTS. HE CITED FACT THAT MRS. YOSHII IS OUT ON BAIL AND IF PROSECUTED WILL PROBABLY ESCAPE WITH ONLY LIGHT SENTENCE FOR INVOLVEMENT IN PASSPORT IRREGULARITY. HER HUSBAND APPARENTLY IS NOT BEING CONSIDERED FOR PROSECUTION AT ALL, AND JAPANESE HAVE PLEADED INABILITY TO PROSECUTE KIM HO-RYONG SOLELY ON BASIS MUN CONFESSION. JAPANESE HAVE ALSO REFUSED TO EXCHANGE INVESTIGATORS WITH ROKG. DESPITE URGENCY OF ROK PRESENTATION, FULL WEEK HAS PASSED SINCE PRESIDENT PARK/USHIROKU CONVERSATION. GOJ PUBLIC UTTERANCES, BEGINNING WITH GAIMUSHO'S OPINION THAT GOJ BEARS NEITHER LEGAL NOR MORAL RESPONSIBILITY, HAVE ALL INDICATED JAPAN DRAGGING ITS FEET, AND EVEN PRIMIN TANAKA'S VISIT TO SEOUL WAS USELESS BECAUSE, IN HIS PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT PARK, HE EXPRESSED ONLY CONDOLENCE OVER DEATH OF MADAME PARK AND DID NOT EVEN EXPRESS ONE WORD OF REGRET. PRIMIN CONCLUDED PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS WITH REMARK THAT TIME IS PASSING; PRESIDENT GROWS MORE IRRITATED AND IMPATIENT DAILY, AND FEELS JAPANESE CONDUCT HAS BEEN "INSULTING."

4. PRIMIN THEN SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED FROM TOKYO THAT GAIMUSHO'S DRAFT OF REPLY TO PRESIDENT PARK WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY JAPANESE CABINET SEPT 6 AND DELIVERED TO FONMIN BY AMBASSADOR USHIROKU SOMETIME EARLY NEXT WEEK. HE HAD ALSO BEEN INFORMED THAT REPLY WOULD BE VAGUE AND UNSATISFACTORY, FALLING FAR SHORT OF MEETING ROK MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.

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5. FEELING THAT PRESIDENT WOULD SIMPLY THROW SUCH A DOCUMENT AWAY, PRIMIN HAD TAKEN CERTAIN STEPS IN ATTEMPT TO ENSURE THAT REPLY WOULD BE MORE RESPONSIVE. HE HAD SENT SPECIAL EMISSARY (UNNAMED) TO SEE FONMIN KIMURA. EMISSARY WAS TO TELL KIMURA THAT ROKG REQUIRES WRITTEN RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT PARK WHICH WILL CONTAIN: (A) AT LEAST AN EXPRESSION OF REGRET FOR EXTENT OF JAPANESE INVOLVEMENT IN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT; (B) STATEMENT THAT GOJ WILL

ENDEAVOR TO DO ITS BEST TO SEE THAT SUCH EVENT DOES NOT RECUR; (C) EXPRESSION OF INTENT TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH ROK IN INVESTIGATION AND TO PROSECUTE YOSHII'S, KIM HO-RYONG, AND ANY OTHER ACCOMPLICES TO EXTENT OF LAW; AND (D) ASSURANCES THAT RECENT EVENTS WOULD IN NO WAY AFFECT TRADITIONAL PATTERN OF RELATIONS BETWEEN KOREA AND JAPAN (E.E., NO JAPANESE MOVE IN DIRECTION OF NORTH KOREA).

6. PRIMIN SAID (5) ABOVE WAS MOST IMPORTANT AND REFERRED TO ROKG DEMAND FOR CRACKDOWN ON CHOSEN SOREN. RECOGNIZING, HOWEVER, DOMESTIC POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES FOR GOJ AND CURRENT WEAKNESS OF TANAKA GOVT, EMISSARY WAS TO TELL KIMURA THAT THIS POINT MADE DELIBERATELY WEAK IN LIGHT OF NEED TO MAKE JAPANESE DOCUMENT PUBLIC. THIS MEANT THAT REPLY MUST BE DELIVERED BY HIGH-LEVEL JAPANESE (PRIMIN SAID HE THINKING IN TERMS OF SATO, SHIINA, OR OHIRA) WHO SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO ASSURE PRESIDENT PARK ORALLY THAT GOJ WOULD TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO AMEND JAPANESE LAW (ESPECIALLY IMMIGRATION LAW AND OTHER LEGISLATION GOVERNING CONDUCT OF FOREIGNERS IN JAPAN) TO PERMIT JAPAN TO CONTROL SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES OF CHOSEN SOREN AGAINST ROK. ROKG WILLING ACCEPT THAT THESE ACTIONS WOULD TAKE TIME.

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /031 W

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O 051225Z SEP 74

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5741

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SEOUL 5846

EXDIS

7. IF THE PRESIDENT WERE TO RECEIVE SUCH REPLY FROM APPROPRIATE EMISSARY, PRIMIN THOUGHT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO PERSUADE PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT IT AND TO RESUME NORMAL

RELATIONS WITH JAPAN. IF THIS COULD NOT BE WORKED OUT, HOWEVER, HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT ACTION PRESIDENT WOULD BE DISPOSED TO TAKE. PRIMIN TANAKA WAS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE JAPAN SEPT 12 AND IMPATIENCE OF NEITHER PRESIDENT NOR ROK PUBLIC COULD BE CONTAINED BEYOND THAT DATE. THE OPPORTUNITY SATISFACTORILY TO RESOLVE IMPASSE CANNOT WAIT FOR TANAKA'S RETURN FROM HIS OVERSEAS TRIP.

8. PRIMIN SAID HE HAD ALSO INSTRUCTED FONMIN TO TELL AMBASSADOR USHIROKU THAT EITHER HE OR FONMIN SHOULD SEE ADVANCE COPY OF JAPANESE REPLY BEFORE FORMAL DELIVERY, TO PREVENT PRESENTATION OF REPLY THAT WOULD FURTHER INCENSE PRESIDENT. (FONMIN HAD INFORMED CHARGE EARLIER THAT HE WOULD BE SEEING USHIROKU FOR THIS PURPOSE AFTERNOON SEPT 5.)

9. PRIMIN SAID THAT INsofar AS PROSECUTION OF JAPANESE ACCOMPLICES WAS CONCERNED, ROKG WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT JAPANESE INABILITY TO PUNISH YOSHII'S EXCEPT FOR MINOR VIOLATIONS OF JAPANESE LAW. HOWEVER, KIM HO-RYONG, AS KOREAN NATIONAL WAS ANOTHER MATTER. ROKG HAD REQUESTED THAT GOJ EXTRADITE HIM TO ROK (KIM APPARENTLY BORN IN MASAN). ROKG FELT THAT DESPITE LACK OF EXTRADITION TREATY, THERE SUFFICIENT PRECEDENT IN INTERNATIONAL LAW
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ON WHICH TO BASE SUCH ACTION. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, ROKG INSISTS THAT AT MINIMUM GOJ DEPORT KIM TO NORTH KOREA FOR VIOLATION OF IMMIGRATION LAW IN HAVING GONE TO NORTH KOREA ABOARD MANKYONGBONG-HO. ROK POSITION IS THAT THIS IS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE AT LEAST SOME DETERRENCE TO SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS BY CHOSEN SOREN. ROKG IS ALSO INSISTING THAT GOJ EXERCISE STRICTEST POSSIBLE SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL OVER MOVEMENTS OF SHIP AND PERSONS WHO VISIT IT WHILE IN JAPAN.

10. PRIMIN SAID HE AWARE THAT FONMIN HAD OFFICIALLY REQUESTED USG TO DO ALL POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE GOJ TO MEET ROK DEMANDS. HE REITERATED REQUEST THAT USG DO SO TO PROTECT ITS INTEREST IN STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA. CHARGE REPLIED THAT HE HAD TRANSMITTED FONMIN'S REQUEST TO DEPT WHERE IT UNDER CONSIDERATION. HOWEVER,;WVOARLY REQUEST HAD BEEN MADE IN CONTEXT OF KIMURA AND TANAKA VISITS TO WASHINGTON AND IT NOW APPEARED THAT PRESIDENT HAD IN MIND SEPT 12 DEPARTURE OF TANAKA FROM JAPAN AS

DEADLINE FOR SATISFACTORY JAPANESE RESPONSE. REFERRING TO RUMORS OF POSSIBLE ROK RETALIATION, REPORTS OF LENGTHY MEETING INVOLVING HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS AND ASSEMBLYMEN, AND EVIDENCE THAT ROKG AGENCIES ARE

STUDYING IMPACT OF BREAK IN RELATIONS WITH JAPAN ON ROK ECONOMY, CHARGE ASKED WHETHER PRIMIN COULD PROVIDE ASSURANCES THAT ROKG NOT CONTEMPLATING PRECIPITOUS ACTION WHICH WOULD WORSEN SITUATION AND EMBARRASS ANY POSSIBLE EFFORT BY USG. AS FONMIN ALSO HAD DONE TO SAME REQUEST EARLIER IN AFTERNOON, PRIMIN EVADED DIRECT RESPONSE. HE SAID THAT HE DOING ALL HE POSSIBLY CAN TO CALM PRESIDENT'S GROWING SENSE OF IRRITATION AND IMPATIENCE AND TO RESTRAIN HOTHEADS IN ROK GOVT AND PUBLIC. HE HOPED THAT USG WOULD HELP WITH JAPANESE BUT AVOIDED ANY REPLY TO TIMING AND NATURE OF FURTHER MEASURES ROKG MIGHT HAVE IN MIND.

11. FONMIN, IN EARLIER CONVERSATION, COVERED MUCH OF SAME GROUND BUT WAS LESS INFORMATIVE. HE SAID HE HOPED USG WOULD APPROACH GOJ BEFORE LATTER DESPATCHES REPLY TO PRESIDENT AND, IN EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER CONFIDENTIAL

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SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION, COULD REFER TO ROKG STRONG DETERMINATION TO BREAK RELATIONS IF IT CAME TO THAT. HE SAID ROKG WATCHING JAPANESE MOVES CAREFULLY, AND IF SATISFACTORY ACTION NOT TAKEN WITHIN "REASONABLE" TIME AND IF ROKG CONCLUDES THAT GOJ NOT WILLING HANDLE SITUATION SINCERELY AS ALLY, ROKG WILL HAVE TO DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED. ACTIONS COULD RANGE FROM "PRELIMINARY RECALL OF AMBASSADORS" TO TOTAL SEVERANCE OF ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

12. COMMENT: PRIMIN'S SUGGESTION FOR CONTENTS OF LETTER AND ORAL ASSURANCES BY SENIOR EMISSARY SEEM REASONABLE IN LIGHT OF ATMOSPHERE HERE, PRESIDENT'S MOOD, AND INTENSE ACTIVITIES WITHIN ROKG (REF B) WHICH DOUBTLESS CENTER OF STUDY OF FURTHER POSSIBLE ACTIONS. IT ALSO SEEMS CLEAR THAT, UNLESS PRIMIN KIM'S EFFORT IS SUCCESSFUL, INPUT FROM USG TO KIMURA AND TANAKA DURING THEIR WASHINGTON VISITS COULD COME TOO LATE TO BE EFFECTIVE.

PRIMIN'S DISCUSSION WITH ME WAS OUT OF "OFFICIAL CHANNELS" AND SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH ROK EMBASSY. TO BEST MY KNOWLEDGE, FONMIN NOT AWARE OF PRIMIN'S INITIATIVE IN CALLING ME IN.
ERICSON

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